

Hello,

On behalf of the California Department of Health Services (DHS), I am pleased to announce the recipients of the 2006 public health leadership awards.

Gary W. Erbeck, MPH, REHS, Director of the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health has been selected to receive the 2006 Beverlee A. Myers Award for Excellence in Public Health. Mr. Erbeck's passionate dedication to environmental health has been instrumental in improving the lives of Californians. His leadership has provided a model of excellence in the field. In his roles as Director of his Department, Chair of the California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health, and the Food Safety Policy Committee he led the charge to develop a new California Retail Food Code; addressed the critical issue of protecting school children from food borne illness; participated in hazardous materials emergency response and Project Clean Water along with numerous other community, industry, media, regulatory, and school efforts. He has positively impacted the public's health on every level.

William Wright, Ph.D, Chief of DHS' Cancer Surveillance Program, is the 2006 DHS Public Health Recognition Award recipient. Dr. Wright's 24 years of visionary leadership, passionate dedication to public health service, and tireless contributions to building the California Cancer Surveillance Program have proved invaluable to the Department and Californians across the state. In particular, the Department recognizes his role in the development of the California Cancer Registry which has advanced the health of Californians through contributing accurate population-based cancer incidence and mortality data. The California Cancer Registry provides a wealth of valuable information to researchers, public health officials, and practitioners to study cancer causes and risk factors, to conduct epidemiological studies, and to develop strategies and policies for the prevention, treatment and control of cancer in California. Under the leadership of Dr. Wright, the level of funding for the California Cancer Surveillance Program has tripled, 4,000 cancer based research projects have been conducted, and 1,300 publications have been disseminated. The program has achieved international renown. Dr. Wright's vision and sense of mission have guided the development and implementation of this program.

Please join me at the Public Health Week Celebration on the West Steps of the Capitol on April 6, 2006, from 11:30 to 1:00 to support Mr. Erbeck and Dr. Wright as they are publicly recognized for their achievements.

Sandra Shewry
Director

